

nounced her desire and intention to remilitarize the Straits in view of the worsening of the European situation, we supported her claim.

V. FRANCE PROPOSES AN ALLIANCE

The divergence of outlook between London and Paris, which complicated the making of the Treaty of Versailles, increased in the early years of peace. The vital connection between economic recovery and political stabilization was more clearly envisaged in England than in France, who had lost in the struggle a larger proportion of a smaller population. Half-blinded by their terrible sufferings, the memory of ancient feuds and their passionate longing for security, the French resolved to keep Germany down as long as they could. It was obvious that an impoverished nation could not pay vast reparations, and the dread of a formidable neighbour recovering his strength outweighed even the desire to collect the expenses of the war. In pursuance of their purpose of keeping Germany weak, the French encouraged separatist movements in Rhenish Prussia and the Bavarian Palatinate, and installed a representative in Munich, despite the fact that the Weimar Constitution abolished the diplomatic privileges of the federal units of the Reich. These attempts to interfere in German domestic politics were rightly condemned by British opinion, and Curzon ordered the British Consul in Munich to investigate French proceedings in the occupied zone. The publication of the Clive report, though hotly resented in France, where the Government pretended to know nothing of the movement, served its purpose by bringing a crazy experiment to an end. We displayed our willingness to insist on the execution of the Treaty by joining in the temporary occupation of three towns

in the Ruhr in 1921 in consequence of default,
but we had no
desire to go beyond its terms.

The collapse of the Tripartite treaty of June
28th, 1918, left
a vacuum which France naturally hungered to
fill. With sub-
sequent experience to guide us, it is arguable
that we should
have offered to renew the pledge which ceased
to bind us
when the United States withdrew ; but at that
time the danger
of German aggression seemed remote. Left to her
own devices,
France concluded agreements with Belgium in
1920, Poland
in 1921, and Czechoslovakia in 1924—better
than nothing,
but a very inadequate substitution for an Anglo-
American
guarantee. Since the repudiation of Wilson and
the return of